

velocity of electricity. But observe how the theory expounded rests on that very idea, how it explains all the seeming contradictions, and shows what in certain cases reduces the velocity of electricity from that of the velocity of light in the ether.

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*Stated Meeting, April 2, 1897.*

Vice-President, Dr. PEPPER, in the Chair.

Present, 45 members.

Correspondence was submitted.

Mr. Pettit, on behalf of the Curators, presented a report, recommending that the North Room be fitted up for the use of the Cabinet.

Dr. Pepper presented the report of the Special Committee on the Needs of the Library.

The following resolutions were then adopted :

1. That the immediate needs of the Library demand that the North Room be devoted to its purposes.

2. That the Peale Collection be maintained in the North Room for the present.

3. That the collections of plants be transferred in trust as a deposit, subject to recall, to such institution as may be ordered by the Society.

4. That the duplicate collection of rocks be submitted to a Committee of Geologists (Messrs. Lyman, Prime, Frazer and Platt), to report to the Society their recommendation as to its disposition.

5. That a Special Committee of nine (Dr. Pepper, Messrs. Harris, Pettit, T. H. Bache, Price, Frazer, Stone, Jos. M. Wilson and Hays) be appointed to adopt plans for the adaptation of the North Room for the above purposes and to make suitable provision for the other objects of the Society, and that the Hall Committee be empowered to expend a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars in carrying into effect the plans so adopted.

A letter from Judge Mitchell on behalf of the Commission to collect and print the Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania, from the foundation of the colony to the year 1800, asking that the Society grant it the privilege of using a volume of

MS. copies of laws prior to 1700, in the possession of the Society, was received.

Dr. Hays stated, in connection with Judge Mitchell's letter, that he had a few days ago incidentally called the attention of Dr. Frederick D. Stone to a manuscript volume of laws of the Province of Pennsylvania, passed prior to November, 1700, which had been presented to the Society in 1835, by the late Joshua Francis Fisher, Esq. Dr. Stone at once recognized that the volume might have a very important bearing on the work of the Commission appointed in 1883 by the State of Pennsylvania to examine and collate, and authorized some years later to publish, the complete text of the Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from the foundation of the Province, 1682 to 1801, of which the second volume (the only one yet issued) has just been presented to the Society by the Commission. The principal reason why the Commissioners had delayed the printing of the first volume was due to the fact that certain laws, twelve in number, noted in the minutes of the Provincial Council as having been passed prior to November, 1700, which date was adopted as the starting-point of the second volume, could not be found. Official inquiries made at Harrisburg, and at the Public Record office in London, elicited replies that no such acts were in the possession of the State or of the English Government. Fruitless search was also made at West Chester, at New Castle and at Dover, as certified copies of the acts, as passed, were then usually sent to the clerks of the several counties. The Penn papers and the early manuscripts in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania were carefully examined in vain, and the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Charles R. Hildeburn, personally made a thorough but fruitless search in the Public Record Office in London for these missing laws. Of all this Dr. Stone was fully aware, and he at once suggested that the attention of the Commission be called to the volume shown him.

Mr. Justice Mitchell, the Chairman of the Commission, and Secretary Hildeburn, upon being informed of the exist-

ence of this valuable and important volume in our Library, at once subjected it to careful examination and found that it contained many of the laws passed prior to November, 1700, including the twelve missing ones, viz., one act passed June 9, 1694; two acts passed February 10, 1699-1700; one act passed May 16, 1700, and eight acts passed June 7, 1700. Some in not quite as satisfactory form as could be desired, but most of them duly attested by the Speaker of the Assembly, signed by Governor Fletcher, and the later acts by Governor Markham, and sealed with the "Lesser Seal" of the Province.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the use of the "Lesser Seal" for such a purpose was a most extraordinary proceeding, and can bear no other explanation than that it was done by William Penn's orders with a view to his claim to a veto power, which was subsequently denied him by the Crown, as the later acts are all passed under the "Great Seal" of the Province.

The only copies of the laws passed prior to November, 1700, possessed by the State and from which the Commission had intended to print, consist of unattested copies made by Patrick Robinson, Secretary of the Council. Hence the Commissioners now desire to print from the duly attested copies of these laws belonging to this Society, rather than from the unattested copies belonging to the State.

It is surmised that the copies contained in the volume belonging to the Society may have come into the office of Andrew Hamilton during the period when he was Attorney-General of the Province, and were acquired by Mr. Fisher in the course of his examination of the Hamilton papers deposited at "The Woodlands."

The finding of these acts will place the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in possession of a complete set of its legislative enactments, from the founding of the Province to the readily accessible "Pamphlet Laws" beginning with 1802. All but two of the original thirteen States of the Union have, at one time or another, attempted to make and publish similar collec-

tions, but not one has succeeded in gathering together all its laws, but now, with the use of the volume which Mr. Fisher with intelligent discrimination rescued from oblivion or worse, and which the American Philosophical Society has so carefully preserved, Pennsylvania will be the only American Commonwealth that is able to present to the world an unbroken series of its own laws.

The following resolution was then adopted :

That permission be given to the Commission for the Compilation of the Laws of Pennsylvania prior to 1800, to refer to and to copy, if they so desire, the MS. volume of original laws of Pennsylvania from 1683 to 1700, presented to this Society in 1835, by Joshua Francis Fisher, Esq., under such regulations as the Library Committee may prescribe.

Prof. Robert W. Rogers, of Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J., and Prof. Morris Jastrow were appointed delegates to the Congress of Orientalists to be held at Paris this summer.

The Society was then adjourned by the presiding officer.

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*Special Meeting, April 23, 1897.*

President FRALEY in the Chair.

Present, 20 members.

Dr. Morris read a paper on "The Relation of the Dodecahedron found near Marietta, O., to Shamanism," which was discussed by Mr. Cushing.

Dr. Harrison Allen laid before the Society a chart of Australian rock carvings, by R. H. Matthews.

The Society was then adjourned by the President.